



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Great Lakes & Ohio River Division

Low Lake Levels

The Great Lakes are experienced water levels that are 2 feet below those of a year ago. While these levels are actually not at record lows, we have enjoyed higher than normal water levels for the past 30 years and the drop has brought with it a number of problems for boaters and other users. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has a number of authorities for assisting States and local governments in the development, use and conservation of water resources. This fact sheet will discuss authorities which may be applicable to sites within the Great Lakes region. These programs were authorized under the various Flood Control Acts (FCA), River & Harbor Acts (RHA) and Water Resources Development Acts (WRDA).

Small Navigation Projects

Authorization: Section 107 of River & Harbor Act of 1960, as amended.

Program Goals: To study, adopt, construct and maintain small navigation projects.

Application: Over 50 navigation projects have been completed in the Great Lakes region under this authority. A recent example is the Toussaint River project in Ohio which improves navigation of the channel connecting to Lake Erie.

Cost Sharing: A Non-Federal partner must pay 50 percent of the feasibility study after the first \$100,000 at full Federal cost. The cost sharing formula for design and construction is based on the type of navigation feature:

- ! general harbor features (80% Federal, 20% Non-Federal)
- ! inland waterways (75% Federal, 25% Non-Federal)
- ! recreational harbor features (50% Federal, 50% Non-Federal)

The local sponsor must also provide all necessary lands, easement, rights-of-way, relocations and disposal (LERRD). The Federal share on individual projects can not exceed \$4,000,000.

Budgetary: Annual funding not to exceed \$35,000,000 Corps-wide. The FY 2000 appropriation for this program is \$7,500,000.

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

Authorization: Section 206 of WRDA 1996.

Program Goals: To carry out aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects.

Application: A number of projects are being studied for restoration of small lakes, coastal wetlands, and water quality.

Cost Sharing: 65% Federal, 35% Non-Federal; operation and maintenance costs are Non-Federal.

Budgetary: Annual funding not to exceed \$25,000,000 Corps-wide. The FY 2000 appropriation for this program is \$6,260,000.

Planning Assistance to States

Authorization: Section 22 of WRDA 1974, as amended.

Program Goals: Support States and tribes in their comprehensive planning for the development, utilization, and conservation of water and related land resources. Section 22 can also be used in watershed and ecosystem planning.

Cost Sharing: 50% Federal, 50% State or tribe.

Budgetary: Annual funding not to exceed \$10,000,000 Corps-wide. The FY 2000 appropriation for this program is \$5,800,000.

Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

Authorization: Section 204 of WRDA 1992, as amended.

Program Goals: Promote beneficial uses of dredged material in connection with dredging at authorized Federal navigation projects.

Application: Sediments dredged from navigation channels have been used for habitat protection and restoration, and may also be used to cap and landscape a brownfield site.

Cost Sharing: 75% Federal, 25% Non-Federal; operation and maintenance costs are Non-Federal.

Budgetary: Annual funding not to exceed \$15,000,000 Corps-wide. The FY 2000 appropriation for this program is \$1,000,000.

Expedited Reconnaissance Study

Authorization: Section 905(b) of WRDA 1986.

Program Goals: To conduct a Reconnaissance Study of a wide range of potential water resources projects at an accelerated schedule. Potential projects may include navigation, flood damage reduction, ecosystem restoration, shoreline or streambank protection, and water quality enhancement.

Cost Sharing: Expedited Reconnaissance Studies are conducted at full-Federal cost, not to exceed \$100,000.

Budgetary: The FY 2000 appropriation for this program directed ten studies in the Great Lakes Basin, all as Congressional Adds.

Reimbursable Support

Aside from the cost-shared authorities described above, the Corps can also provide technical support to Federal, State, municipal and tribal agencies on a reimbursable basis.

For More Information

In order to obtain more information about the application of any of these programs in the Great Lakes basin, contact the following Corps District offices for sites in:

New York, PA and Ohio

Philip Berkeley
Buffalo District
716-879-4145
Philip.E.Berkeley@usace.army.mil

Michigan, MN and WI

Joseph Wanielista
Detroit District
313-226-7474
Joseph.R.Wanielista@usace.army.mil

Illinois and Indiana

Phil Bernstein
Chicago District
312-353-6400 ext 2000
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For the latest information about current lake levels and projections for future lake levels, check out the Great Lakes Hydraulics & Hydrology homepage:

www.lre.usace.army.mil/hmpggh.html

For more examples of programs for navigation, shoreline protection, flood control, and environmental restoration, check out the Corps' Great Lakes Region homepage:

www.lrd.usace.army.mil/gl/gl.htm